

Together, we can all help our children be prepared to meet life's challenges and realize the great promise of our country.

My Administration continues to support programs that help prepare America's youth for the opportunities ahead. The No Child Left Behind Act requires that every child have access to a quality education. We have made significant progress toward that goal across the country, with students achieving record math and reading scores. The America COMPETES Act, which was built upon my American Competitiveness Initiative, helped strengthen our goal of staying competitive within the global economy. The Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, encourages adults to work to help our young people reach their full potential.

On National Child's Day and throughout the year, we honor the boys and girls of America and show our gratitude to those who work to support them. This day is a reminder to us all that our commitment to children helps make our country a better place.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 1, 2008, as National Child's Day. I call upon all our citizens to celebrate National Child's Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also urge all Americans to dedicate time and energy to educating our youth and providing them with a safe and caring environment.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:59 a.m., June 3, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on June 4. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## **Proclamation 8264—Black Music Month, 2008**

*May 30, 2008*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

America's diverse musical heritage exemplifies the creativity and optimism of our Nation. During Black Music Month, we celebrate the extraordinary talents and creativity of African-American singers, musicians, and composers whose achievements have enriched our culture and enhanced our lives.

For generations, African-American artists have created music that communicates across racial boundaries and expresses both joy and sorrow. When facing the cruelty of slavery and injustice, African Americans lifted spirituals to the heavens, bringing comfort to troubled souls. These timeless declarations of hope and faith evolved into the more modern genres of gospel, blues, ragtime, and jazz, and they are given voice in the musical genius of Scott Joplin, Marian Anderson, Eubie Blake, and Mahalia Jackson. During the Civil Rights era, African-American musicians such as Duke Ellington, Muddy Waters, and Ruth Brown conveyed the struggles of their communities while bringing people of all backgrounds together. Today, this music continues to inspire America's citizens and advance its creative spirit.

Throughout the course of American history, black musicians have used their great talents to share the richness of the African-American experience and to develop a uniquely American style of music enjoyed throughout the world. This month, we honor the pioneers of African-American music and today's contemporary artists who have enriched the lives of people everywhere.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2008 as Black Music Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history of black music and to enjoy the great contributions of African-American singers, musicians, and composers.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:59 a.m., June 3, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 31, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on June 4.

## **The President's Radio Address**

*May 31, 2008*

Good morning. Next week, Congress will return to Washington after its Memorial Day recess. I hope Members of Congress return rested, because they have a lot of work left on important issues and limited time to get it done.

Congress needs to pass a responsible war funding bill that puts the needs of our troops first, without loading it up with unrelated domestic spending. Our troops in Afghanistan are performing with courage and honor, delivering blows to the Taliban and Al Qaida. Our troops in Iraq have driven Al Qaida and other extremists from sanctuaries they once held across the country and are chasing them from their last remaining strongholds. Our men and women in uniform are risking their lives every day, and they deserve the resources and flexibility they need to complete their mission.

Congress needs to support our military families by passing an expansion of the GI bill that makes it easier for our troops to transfer unused education benefits to their spouses and children. It is critical for this legislation to support the All-Volunteer Force and help us recruit and retain the best military in the world.

Congress needs to ensure that our intelligence professionals have the tools to monitor terrorist communications quickly and effectively. Last year, Congress passed temporary legislation that provided these tools. Unfortunately, the law expired more than 3 months ago. Congress needs to pass long-term legislation that will help our intelligence

professionals learn our enemies' plans before they can attack and put an end to abusive lawsuits filed against companies believed to have assisted the Government after the attacks of September the 11th. And Congress needs to act soon so we can maintain a vital flow of intelligence.

Congress needs to approve the Colombia free trade agreement so we can open a growing market for American goods, services, and crops. Unfortunately, the House of Representatives is blocking a vote on this vital agreement. Unless this agreement is brought up for a vote, it will die. This will hurt American workers, farmers, and businessowners, and it will hurt our Nation's strategic interests in a vital region of the world.

Congress needs to confirm the good men and women who have been nominated to important Government positions. There are now more than 350 nominations pending before the Senate. These include highly qualified people I have nominated to fill vacancies on the Federal bench. And they include talented nominees who are needed to help guide our economy during a time of uncertainty. For example, three nominees to the Federal Reserve have been waiting for confirmation for more than a year. And because of Senate inaction, the Council of Economic Advisers is now down to a single member. This confirmation backlog makes it harder for Government to meet its responsibilities, and the United States Senate needs to give every nominee an up-or-down vote as soon as possible.

One nominee who needs to be confirmed right away is Steve Preston. A month has passed since I nominated Steve to be the next Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Unfortunately, Senators have stalled this nomination over an issue that has nothing to do with Steve or his qualifications for the job. With all the turbulence in the housing market, this is no time to play politics with such a critical appointment. So I call on the Senate to give Steve Preston a prompt vote and confirm this good man without further delay.

At a time when many Americans are concerned about keeping their homes, Congress needs to pass legislation to modernize the Federal Housing Administration, reform